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DAY LEAD MCCONE
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WASHINGTON, Sept. 29 (UPI)--JOHN A. MCCONE GOT THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION OUT OF A SERIOUS JAM WITH CONGRESS.

"AND IF THE CIA NEEDS STRAIGHTENING OUT," SAYS A CLOSE ACQUAINTANCE, "JOHN MCCONE IS JUST THE MAN TO DO IT."

MCCONE, 59-YEAR-OLD SAN FRANCISCO INDUSTRIALIST AND PATRON OF THE OPERA, IS BLUE-EYED, PINK-CHEEKED, WHITE-HAIRED. HE WEARS RIMLESS GLASSES AND DRESSES CONSERVATIVELY, USUALLY IN BLUE.

HE HAS A GENTLE AIR. WHEN HE SMILES, IT WOULD BE EASY TO THINK OF HIM AS A PARTICULARLY SYMPATHETIC FAMILY PHYSICIAN. HE IS A GRACIOUS MAN, THE KIND WHO REMEMBERS TO SAY "PLEASE" AND "THANK YOU."

BUT OCCASIONALLY THE SMILE VANISHES. OCCASIONALLY THE BLUE EYES GLARE. THEN IT IS EASY TO BELIEVE WHAT ANOTHER ACQUAINTANCE SAYS:

"HE IS A TERRIBLY DEMANDING AND HARD-DRIVING BUSINESS EXECUTIVE. HE IS THE MAN-IN-CHARGE."

WHEN PRESIDENT KENNEDY PICKED MCCONE THIS WEEK TO SUCCEED ALLEN W. DULLES AS DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, THE CIA WAS STILL BEING BLAMED--RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY--FOR THE FAILURE OF THE U.S.-SUPPORTED ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW THE CASTRO DICTATORSHIP IN CUBA.

BECAUSE OF THE 66-YEAR-OLD DULLES' SENSATIONAL CAREER AS A U.S. AGENT IN WORLD WAR II AND HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICES SINCE, CIA CRITICS WERE RELUCTANT TO BLAME HIM PERSONALLY FOR THE CUBAN FIASCO.

BUT THERE HAVE BEEN CHARGES THAT "MIDDLE FIDELITY" OFFICIALS IN HIS AGENCY HAVE REPEATEDLY GONE TOO FAR IN THEIR ZEAL AND OFTEN HAVE GOT THE COUNTRY INTO HOT WATER.

ONE OF THE THINGS BEING SAID OF MCCONE IS THAT WHEN HE TAKES OVER IN NOVEMBER, HE WILL BE THE BOSS AND THE CIA WILL ATTEMPT NO VENTURES WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN THOROUGHLY THOUGHT OUT IN ADVANCE.

THINKING THINGS OUT IN ADVANCE IS MCCONE'S SPECIALTY--HE IS AN ENGINEER, A MANUFACTURER, A BUSINESSMAN WHOSE PRUDENCY HAS EARNED HIM MILLIONS. HE ALSO IS A FINE PRACTICAL POLITICIAN.

WHEN HE TOOK OVER THE AEC IN MID-1958, IT WAS IN BAD TROUBLE WITH THE HOUSE-SENATE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMITTEE. THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN, LEWIS L. STRAUSS, AND THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, SEN. CLINTON P. ANDERSON, D-N.M., DESPISED EACH OTHER. THE ATOMIC PROGRAM SUFFERED.

MCCONE, A REPUBLICAN, QUICKLY WON OVER THE DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE. HE KNEW HOW TO BE DEFERENTIAL WITHOUT SACRIFICING DIGNITY. HE WAS PERSUASIVE. HE STOOD HIS GROUND ON OCCASION BUT ALWAYS WITHOUT TRUCULENCE.

WHEN HE FINISHED HIS 2-1/2 YEARS AS AEC CHAIRMAN AND BORED OUT WITH THE REST OF THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION, COMMISSION-COMMITTEE RELATIONS NEVER WERE BETTER. THIS WAS A RESULT, HIS ADMIRERS SAY, OF BIPARTISANSHIP AT ITS FINEST.

IT ALSO WAS THE RESULT OF ABILITY TO RELAX. MCCONE DOESN'T SMOKE. BUT HE HAS TILTED HIGHBALLS WITH MANY A CONGRESSMAN.

AS CIA DIRECTOR MCCONE WILL NOT HAVE TO ANSWER TO A CONGRESSIONAL "WATCH-DOG COMMITTEE" AS HE DID AS AEC CHAIRMAN. HE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE SOLELY TO THE PRESIDENT. THE CIA THIS FAR HAS SUCCESSFULLY BLOCKED